

VZCZCXRO0087
RR RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHUJA #1814 2751231
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 021231Z OCT 09
FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7140
INFO RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 2036
RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS ABUJA 001814

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W; INL/AEE; INL/AA

E.O.: 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [ASEC](#) [EAID](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA'S DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY MAKES FIRST ARREST ON
U.S. BOUND FLIGHT OF TRAFFICKER WITH HEROIN

11. (SBU) On September 23, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) personnel arrested Nigerian National Onugha Benjamin Simon at Lagos's Murtala Mohamed International Airport while he attempted to board a U.S. bound Delta Airlines flight with heroin. During the screening of passengers, NDLEA personnel used INL-donated scanners to detect heroin wraps secreted in Simon's body. After detecting the courier, the NDLEA surveillance team informed a Consulate General Lagos DEA agent, who happened to be on the airport premises at the time of the incident.

12. (SBU) According to DEA, Simon was cooperative and confessed that he met an unidentified individual at a travel agency who gave him the drugs to ingest and promised to purchase his ticket to the U.S. Simon said this second person took him to a hotel, gave him the heroin wraps to ingest and warned him not to reveal any information about him if captured. Based on this agreement, the second person dropped off Simon at the airport and called back to confirm if he had boarded his flight. Once arrested, Simon gave the telephone number of his contact to NDLEA and the DEA agent. NDLEA called the line to entice the unidentified contact to appear at the airport, but there was no response, and the individual later switched off the phone.

13. (SBU) NDLEA determined that Simon had ingested 51 wraps and inserted 19 wraps in his buttocks, totaling 995 grams of heroin. Simon confessed that he ingested the drugs four days prior to his arrest.

14. (SBU) NDLEA and DEA plan to monitor Delta Airlines flights more closely as this was the first arrest of a drug courier on a direct flight to the U.S. on the newly established route.

15. (U) This cable was coordinated with Consulate General Lagos.

MCCULLOUGH